

Obituary



MEMORIAL STEPHEN WYTHER

1874-1923

Classmate—Friend—Scholar

By Charles A. Dukes

As Christmas was passing, and Stephen was sitting by the fire with his family, he fell asleep. Sleep has been defined as preparation for greater work. Though we must let him sleep for this greater work, we will miss our Fellow, classmate, and friend.

The medical history of Alameda County and the State of California are closely linked with that of Stephen Wythe. His grandfather, J. H. Wythe, was the first professor of Bacteriology of Cooper Medical College, and belonged to that group of teachers composed of Lane, Cushing, and others who made medical history for California and the world. His father, also a graduate of medicine and a teacher, died when Stephen was very young.

It was in our student days at Cooper that I began to know the sterling qualities and wonderful character of Stephen, and, after his graduation, those of us who were closest to him knew of his love for his widowed mother and his wonderful care of his grandfather in his invalid days of old age; then his splendid years as husband and father and his example of fine manhood and a Christian gentleman. His service to his country during the Spanish-American War was in the navy, where he made an enviable record. During recent years he has practiced the specialty of eye, ear, nose and throat, and he will be missed by his large number of private patients, his clinic patients at the Health Center, and at the Merritt Hospital, where he was a member of the staff and gave so generously of his talents.

No man was more universally beloved and respected than Stephen Wythe, and no man more deserving.

The Alameda County Medical Society has lost a valued member, and those of us who have been near to him in his busy and active career will miss a scholar of rare qualities, always ready to help the sick and suffering with his advice.

We extend to his family our sympathies in this hour of sorrow.

HEALTH SERVICE ISSUES ANNUAL REPORT

While stressing the need for new Marine Hospitals and the difficulty of securing medical officers for the regular corps of the Public Health Service, the Surgeon-General states in his annual report that sanitary reports indicate that general health conditions throughout the United States have continued as satisfactory as in recent years. An increasing interest in public health improvement has been noted. In these reports, year after year, it is interesting to note the shifting of emphasis, which is due in part to progress in medical science." The present report for 1923 shows that the plague work, which has heretofore been the subject of much consideration in the annual reports has, temporarily at least, practically faded from the picture. Both human and rodent plague appears to have been eradicated in the United States except for infected ground squirrels in California and all anti-plague measures in other States have been discontinued.

We are warned, however, that, owing to the difficulty of completely exterminating rats on board vessels and the present widespread dissemination of plague, geographically, there is constant danger of the introduction of this disease at all seaports engaged in foreign trade.

While typhus, plague, and yellow fever have been reported from countries with which the United States has been in constant communication, because of the enforcement of international sanitary agreements and the maintenance of national quarantine systems, no cases of major, quarantinable diseases have gained access to this country within the year covered by the report.

Twenty-five hospitals are now operated by the Public Health Service, including the National Leprosarium at Carville, La. Great advancement in the hospital standards of the Public Health Service is noted. At the same time, there has been a reduction in the per diem cost.

DEATHS

Benness, James Wemyss. Died at San Bernardino, February 10, 1924, age 63. Graduate of the University of Louisville Medical Department, 1893. Licensed in California in 1915. He was a member of the San Bernardino County Medical Society, the California Medical Association, and the American Medical Association.

Bloch, Herbert Isaac. Died at San Francisco, March 4, 1924, age 50. Graduate of Cooper Medical College, San Francisco, 1894. He was a member of the San Francisco County Medical Society, the California Medical Association, and a Fellow of the American Medical Association.

Easterday, George Spalatin. Died at Watsonville, March 10, 1924. Graduate of the Eclectic Medical College of Cincinnati, 1878. Licensed in California in 1900. He was a member of the Santa Cruz County Medical Society, the California Medical Association, and the American Medical Association.

Hays, Wilfred Bertram. Died at San Francisco, March 5, 1924, age 52. Graduate of the University of California Medical School, 1906. He was a member of the Sonoma County Medical Society, the California Medical Association, and the American Medical Association.

Thompson, J. Goodwin. Died at Oakland, February 19, 1924, age 59. Graduate of the University of California Medical School, 1894. He was a member of the Alameda County Medical Society, the California Medical Association, and the American Medical Association.